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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA

1820
DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

May 22, 1953
DATE

REF :

Action Assigned to *Vincent*

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	REC'D MAY 23	OTHER	ARMY	NAVY	AIR	OSD	CIA		

SUBJECT: Joint Weeka No. 21 for State, Army, Navy and Air Departments from SANA *3-26-53*

Part I

Political

(CONFIDENTIAL) Revolt Rumors. The Embassy has heard rumors to the effect that Prio Auténticos and Ochoa Ortodoxos are planning a revolution to be staged at the height of the "dead" season in late July or August when sugar workers are expected to be unemployed and hungry. Groups are said to be ready to rise up in all the provinces. One of the principal leaders in Habana is said to be Feliciano MADERNE, who participated in the Cayo Confite expedition.

(CONFIDENTIAL) Comment. There has been much talk of an imminent meeting in the United States between Prio and other Auténticos and Ochoa, Pelayo Cuervo and other Ortodoxos. All indications are that such a meeting will or has taken place but it is said to be for the purpose of devising some form of political amalgamation in opposition to Batista. On the other hand, the rumors reaching the Embassy have it that it is the final meeting prior to the rumored revolt. Although the Embassy's source is considered trustworthy, his information regarding the alleged planned revolt is not firsthand and at this time cannot be evaluated as more than possibly true.

(UNCLASSIFIED) Easter Sunday Conspiracy Trial. The trial before the Habana Urgency Court of the persons arrested on Easter Sunday on charges of conspiring to overthrow the Government (see Weeka No. 18) finally drew to a close. Of about 70 people on trial, the prosecuting attorney requested jail sentences for only 14, recommending that the rest be acquitted for lack of evidence. The final judgment of the Court in the case of these 14 condemned Rafael GARCIA Bárcena the alleged ringleader of the affair, to two years imprisonment, three persons to one year in jail, one to six months, and eight to three months. One person was acquitted.

FCFornes, Jr.:rc
REPORTER

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lawyers immediately announced that they would appeal the verdict on the ground of unconstitutionality.

(RESTRICTED) Comment. This case, the charges in which have already been frequently called a "frame-up" by the Government, is practically sure to be exploited by anti-Batista elements as proof positive of repressive measures and complete lack of guarantees under the present regime. The possibility exists, of course, that pardons may be granted in this case as was done in the Emilio OCHOA case several months ago.

(UNCLASSIFIED) Cuban Independence Day Celebration. Cuba's Independence Day on May 20 was celebrated by an official reception given by President Batista for the diplomatic and consular corps, government, military and other authorities, civic groups, and the general public. The various groups filed in and out of the presidential palace practically throughout the day. The only incident that marred the holiday was reported from Guanajay in the Province of Pinar del Rio. A meeting being held there by the Catholic Action youth to celebrate the day was reported to have been broken up by the Rural Guard with some shooting. Several people appear to have been hurt and one bystander wounded, and a number of arrests were reported.

Psychological

(UNCLASSIFIED) Communist Attacks on American Military. The Communists continued to attack the American military team checking U. S.-supplied equipment (see Weeka No. 20). The Communist "Socialist Youth", the Cuban Women's Democratic Federation, and Communist unions were brought into the act, with the latter addressing a letter of condemnation to the Minister of State. Absolutely no attention was paid to the team by any other than Communist publications.

The American naval base at Guantánamo was attacked in a letter published in Hoy. It was alleged that certain work being carried out by base authorities increased the danger of flood in certain areas and that the base, in addition to being a "center of corruption, espionage and contraband", was "endangering the lives of thousands of people".

(UNCLASSIFIED) Oatis Case. The release of Associated Press correspondent William N. Oatis was covered fully in the Habana press although reaction was slight, with only the English-language Havana Post and the Communist Hoy expressing opinions on the matter. The Post warned that Oatis' release

should not be "interpreted as indicating a change of mind on the part of the Reds with respect to their plan of world conquest". Hoy declared that Oatis' statements upon his release to the effect that he had been treated well and that his confession had not been given under duress belied the slanderous allegations of the American press over the past two years regarding his testimony and "espionage" activities.

(UNCLASSIFIED) Reaction to Assistant Secretary Cabot's Speech. The anti-protectionist point of view expressed by Assistant Secretary of State Cabot in his speech before the National Foreign Trade Council on May 15 was considered as especially gratifying since it expressed the point of view of a Republican administration and was a sign of hope that the United States was gaining greater knowledge and understanding of Latin American problems.

(UNCLASSIFIED) Dominican Charges Against Assistant Secretary Cabot. The press gave prominence to reports of Dominican charges of interference in the republic's internal affairs by Assistant Secretary of State Cabot, and to the Department's denial of such charges. El Mundo and Diario de la Marina carried a USIS release and a UP despatch under headlines that emphasized that the charges were too ridiculous to deserve comment. There has so far been no editorial reaction to the reports from Ciudad Trujillo.

(UNCLASSIFIED) Speech of President Eisenhower. President Eisenhower's address to the nation on May 19 was given full front-page coverage in all leading Habana newspapers but has thus far brought forth no editorial comment.

(UNCLASSIFIED) Newsreel Censorship. The censorship order on Cuban newsreels remained in effect (see Weekas Nos. 19 and 20), but there were press reports that a proposed meeting by the representatives of the Federation of Broadcasters of Cuba and officials of the Government would bring about an early solution to the problem.

Army, Navy, Air

Negative.

For the Ambassador:



Earl T. Crain
Acting Counselor of Embassy

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